DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 450 422 CS 217 473

AUTHOR Stern, Lois W.
TITLE Literature and the Young Child, Part Three: Ages 3-7+. Broadening Experiences/Expanding Imagination & Concepts.
PUB DATE 2001-00-00
NOTE 12p.; For Literature and the Young Child, Parts 1-4, see CS 217 471-474.
AVAILABLE FROM For full text: http://www.kidstories.com/article3.html.
PUB TYPE Opinion Papers (120) -- Reference Materials - Bibliographies (131)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Annotated Bibliographies; *Child Development; *Childrens Literature; *Concept Formation; *Imagination; Parent Participation; *Reading Aloud to Others; *Young Children
IDENTIFIERS *Childhood Experiences; Response to Literature

ABSTRACT

This paper, three of four on literature and the young child, investigates two more ways that a parent's simple act of reading to a child during his or her early years helps him or her grow into a successful reader, namely: reading to the child will help him or her broaden the range of experiences; and reading to the child will help him or her understand basic concepts. The paper contains a 9-item annotated bibliography (No. 5) which recommends books to broaden experiences/expand imagination; and another 10-item annotated bibliography (No. 6) which recommends books to define and/or refine concepts. (NKA)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 450 422

Literature and the Young Child

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Part Three: Age 3 - 7+

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
L.W. Stern
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

by Lois W. Stern

Broadening Experiences/ Expanding Imagination & Concepts

This is the third segment in a series of articles about Literature and the Young Child. If you missed Part One orPart Two, do start by reading them.

This segment focuses on items five and six from Part One, by investigating two more ways the simple act of reading to your child during the early years helps him grow into a successful reader.

- **Reading to your young child will help broaden her range of experiences.**
- **Reading to your young child will help him understand basic concepts.**

•5) Your child gains many new experiences through books.

There is no denying that we learn best by doing. This is true for adults as well as children. So whenever it is possible to have your child experience first hand, grab the opportunity. Sittting on a pony's back, high above the ground, feeling the bounce and sway of its body, touching its bristly fur, smelling those pungent pony smells, perhaps even feeding him some oats or a sugar cube at the end of the ride . . Well, there simply is no substitute for the actual experience.

So let's imagine that your child actually took a pony ride . . .

CS 217 473

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Now perhaps several weeks or even months have passed and your child has nearly forgotten the whole pony experience. Then she spots Frank Asch's book, *Goodnight Horsey*, at the library. She is attracted to its cover where a little girl is pictured, with head leaned forward, kissing a horse. She begins to recall her pony ride and asks you to read her this book.
At first she is flooded with visceral memories: the smells, textures, motions and feelings about that day. Just as this book helps reinforce her real life experiences, her real life experiences have helped connect her to the book.
As you continue to read, this same young child giggles as she watches the daddy in the story, crouched on all fours, slowly growing long ears and a tail. You explain that this is just make believe and could never happen in real life. She begins to comprehend the differences between her pony friend and the imaginary animal in Mr. Asch's book. She also sees how we can make such wonderful stories appear with out imagainations. Someday she may even retrieve this nugget without remembering the source and adapt it to tell or write an original tale.
This is an example of how books fuel the imagination. We oft times have no recollection of how creative thoughts pop into our heads, but those seeds frequently are planted early on, from stories heard in childhood.

As the story unfolds and you share the pictures, your child learns that Daddy's hands and feet become hooves. She sees them in the illustrations and may even associate them with the clopping sound made by her pony. Perhaps *hooves* becomes one of her new vocabulary words. (Remember in Part Two how we spoke about books as an important source for enriching vocabulary?) Perhaps she asks how a pony differs from a horse. As you research and explain this subtle difference, you help her refine her understanding.

I have been stressing the notion of real life experiences first whenever possible. That's a fine idea! But a ride on a tiger's back or a trip to the moon is a whole different story! Some experiences are simply not safe; others, not feasible.

Books give your child an opportunity to learn about places and events that he would be unlikely to experience first hand. They also open the door to the world of fantasy - providing opportunities to experience that which would be impossible to experience in reality.

Perhaps you and your child live in a tropical climate where temperatures rarely go below freezing. He may not have an opportunity to touch and taste snow, examine a snowflake, drag his feet through a snow drift. But he can experience snow vicariously through Ezra Jack Keat's wonderful book, *A Snowy Day*. Few children have an opportunity to go *owling*. But your little one can go tiptoeing along with the father and child in Jane Yolen's magnificent book, *Owl Moon*, feel the chill of that evening and the chill of anticipation in the air. It's the next best step to being there!

See Bibliography #5 for descriptions of books recommended to broaden or expand experiences.

6) Your child will learn the meaning of many new concepts through books.

Volumes could be written about concepts, the building blocks to abstract thought. Here is a sampling of some of the concepts we want to help our young children develop with examples of each.

Concepts	Ways of defining	Examples
time	time of day	morning, noon, evening
	days of the week	Sunday, Monday, Tuesday
	months	January, February, March
	seasons	Winter, Spring, Summer.
	past, present and future	yesterday, now, tomorrow
Positions in Space	space linked prepositions	over, under, between, below
Size	general	big, small, tiny, thin
	comparative	bigger, smaller, narrower
	superlatives	widest, largest, smallest
Quantity	absolute general (collectives)	three, seven, two most, few, some
Opposites		boy-girl, play-work, pretty-ugly

Those listed above are but the *concept tip-of-the-iceberg*. Anyabstract or generic idea which can be generalized can be termed aconcept.
Obviously mastering concepts is a constantly evolving process.Conversations and concrete objects serve as models for many of them.Can you guess what I'm about to say next? You guessed it! Readingbooks to your child is another excellent tool for helping define andrefine concepts.

See Bibliography #6 for descriptions of books recommended to help develop basic concepts.

(c) Copyright Lois W. Stern * 1997, 2001
All rights reserved

*** About the Author:** An active educator for over twenty years, Lois W. Stern has made numerous presentations and led a variety of workshops for parents and teachers. Although themes have varied, all in some way have included the use of children's books in helping to develop literacy skills. After completing a most rewarding career in education, Ms. Stern has been dedicating herself to writing. She currently is co-editor of LI EYE, a Long Island web-zine, and founder and president of ***Kidstories***. Her photo-and-fact-personalized children's book and poems can be seen at: http://www.kidstories.com/

Bibliography #5:
Books to Broaden Experiences/Expand Imagination

List Compiled by Lois W. Stern

****Key to age recommendations:****

I: Infants T: Toddlers P: Preschoolers
EG: Early Grades (K-2) MG: Middle Grades (3-4)

Asch, Frank, *Goodnight Horsey*, Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1981.
This story describes a bedtime ritual shared by a little girl and her Daddy.

Every night, before I go to sleep

my daddy brings me a glass of water.

Then he reads me a story,

gives me a kiss,

and turns out the light.

But one night before I went to sleep,

I asked my daddy for a horsey ride.

As soon as I climbed onto his back . . .

his hands and feet became hooves.

Suddenly this pajama clad child is transformed into an indian princess riding through an enchanted forest.

Ages: T, P, EG

Carle, Eric, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, , Philomel, 1969; Puffin, 1984. The fascinating story of the growth of a butterfly unfolds throughvibrant pictures and this simple story. The stages from egg to caterpillar, cocoon to butterfly are captured magnificently. This book has a cumulative pattern, as described in Article One. It also is a beginning counting book. As this beautiful caterpillar continues to eat, holes appear on the pages. First one, then two and finally five. Children can actually *feel* the holes as they count.

Ages: T, P, EG

Carle, Eric, The Very Lonely Firefly, Philomel Books, 1995.
With this title Eric Carle has completed his quartet of books about tiny creatures. The author describes this book as one about belonging, and its simple story demonstrates the firefly's need to seek out its fellow creatures, just as humans do. A few facts about fireflies are highlighted on an introductory page - just enough to capture the interest of a child curious about these light giving beetles. A delightful visual feast greets the reader upon turning to the last page. (See also other books of this quartet, each with its own multisensory surprises:, *The Very Quiet*, *Cricket*, and *The Very Busy Spider*.)

Ages: T, P, EG

Carle, Eric, Papa, please get the moon for me, Philomel Books, 1995.
The cycle of the waxing and waning of the moon is only one focus of this book, but one which can certainly expand a child's interest in its changing shape and serve as a springboard to some sky watching activities. On another level this book is an expression of a father's love for his child, demonstrated by his desire to fulfill her every wish.

Ages: T, P, EG

Crews, Donald, Freight Train, Greenwillow, 1978.
This book of color and motion conveys the feeling of rolling wheels and speeding trains as colors streak across the trestles and through the tunnels and cities depicted on its pages.

Ages: T, P, EG
Awards: Caldecott Honor Book

Johnson, Crocket, Harold and the Purple Crayon, Harper & Row, 1955.
Children adore the imaginative concept of this simple little book. Harold creates his own adventure filled world as he goes for a moonwalk. His purple crayon draws each part of his adventure from the trim little boat and the hungry moose to the hot air balloon which takes him back home. Then he uses his crayon to make his bed and draw up the covers. The purple crayon falls to the floor as this innocent looking cherub drifts off to sleep. The purple things that Harold draws are the only color appearing in this book.

Ages: P, EG
Awards: Caldecott Honor Book

LaMarche, *The Raft*, Harper Collins Publishers, 2000. Mr. LaMarche wrote this story from "bits and pieces" stored from his boyhood memories: summers in the north woods of Wisconsin, the raft he discovered hidden among the river reeds, animals he befriended during his rafting expeditions, the emergence of his talents as an artist. As this raft weaves its special magic, Nicky's grandmother uses her wisdom and skill to convert her grandson from a reluctant visitor, to an eager participant. You will experience Nicky's entire array of emotions, from dreaded anticipation to the thrills of boyhood discovery. Mr. LaMarche's illustrations are extraordinarily beautiful paintings that capture each moment with full heart.
Ages: EG, MG

Stern, Lois W., (Yes, that's me.) *Wow! Am I Lucky!*, Personalized Stories, Inc., 1995, 1998.
Sharing the experience of starting school is the theme of this story book. It comes in four editions so that it can match each child's school experience, [from beginning preschool through grades one/two]. Custom printed, this book is personalized by taking names and facts unique to your child and seemlessly integrating them into the text.
A personalized *Wow! Am I Lucky!* Activity Book is also available to give children hands-on experiences with readiness skills in a fun, appealing format.
For more information or to place an order, go to http://www.kidstories.com

Ages: P, EG

Zeifert, Harriet, (Karen Gundersheimer, illustrator), Chocolate Mud Cake, Harper & Row, 1988.
The joy of a simple childhood activity becomes the inspiration for this imaginative little book. So charming in its simplicity, this is the story of two children making a mud cake at Grandma and Grandpa's house. Crumble the dirt, mash the lumps, take out the stones, mix and stir. Now bake in the sum. This book shows so vividly how children can use their own imaginations and simple household items to make an ordinary day something wonderful.

Ages: P, EG

(c) Copyright 1997, 2001 Lois W. Stern
All rights reserved

Bibliography #6:
Books to Define and/or Refine Concepts
List Compiled by Lois W. Stern

****Key to age recommendations:****
I: Infant T: Toddler P: Preschool EG: Early Grades (K-2) MG: Middle Grades (3-4)

Florian, Douglas, *A Pig is Big*, Greenwillow Books, 2000.
A pig is big.
A pig is fat.
A pig is bigger than my hat.
What's bigger than a pig?
With each subsequent verse in rhyme, this story moves on to something bigger than the last. Douglas Florian takes us on a trip with his favorite pink pig down a street, through a neighborhood, around a city, over the Earth and into the universe. You and your child can play the game as you read and afterwards (with objects in your surrounding environment). "What is bigger than . . . ?" "Which is biggest . . . ?" The double page spread, watercolor illustrations are filled with amusing details, color and broad strokes. *A Pig is Big* is a visually and contextually appealing book. The unusual nature of the objects he has selected for comparison lend a unique quality to this book of relative size concepts.

Ages: T, P

Gunson, Christopher, *Over on the Farm, a counting picture book in rhyme*, Scholastic Press, 1995

Over on the farm in the early morning sun

lived a clever mother cat

and her little cat one.

"Stretch" said the mother.

"I stretch," said the one.

So he stretched and felt warm

in the early morning sun.

Uncluttered sunny illustrations with a childlike appeal help children learn number values, what three or five of something looks like. (This is different from rote counting, which is simply counting in sequence.) This charming verse is an updated adaptation of an old favorite, *Over in the Meadow*.

Ages: P, EG,

Hoban,Tana, *All About Where*, Greenwillow Books, 1991. The answers to *where* is found in each of the colored photographs of objects both unique and commonplace, such as a boat *in* a bottle, a rope wrapped *around* a post, a hen peering *through* the chicken wire. A list of common prepositions is in full view of each page for ready dicussion of those words that answer *where*. (See also by this same author, *More Than One, Push,Pull Empty Full*, and others.)

Ages: T, P, EG

Hooper, Meredith, *Seven Eggs*, Harper Collins, 1985.

On Monday the first egg cracked and out came a baby penguin.

As the days of the week progress, a new animal emerges each day to join those who have already broken through their shells. The pages are layered in width to accomodate the ever increasing number of creatures who have hatched and continue to grow. A surprise awaits all of them and the reader on the seventh day.

Ages: P, EG

Hutchins, Pat, *Rosie's Walk*, Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc. 1968. Rosie the Hen goes for a walk: *across* the walk, *around* the pond, *past* the mill, *through* the fence, *under* the beehives and back in time for dinner, totally oblivious to the fox who is trailing her. Meanwhile this fox meets one humorous calamity after another in his quest for Rosie, each of which is pictured in the illustrations, but never mentioned in

the text.
Ages: P, EG

Jonas, Ann, *Round Trip*, Greenwillow, 1983. Through silhouetted black and white pictures, Ms. Jonas literally takes us on a round trip through the pages of this book. We travel in one direction as we read to the back cover, then flip over the book to read our way back to the front cover. The book is filled with concepts and rich vocabulary:

We started out as soon as it was light.

Our neighborhood was quiet, the house dark. . .

Town was empty,

the stores still closed.

Ages: P, EG

McMillan, Bruce, *Becca Backward, Becca Frontward, A Book of Concept Pairs*, Lothrop, Lee, Shephard Books, 1986. Full pages of colored photographs depict a four year old child joyfully demonstrating eleven pairs of opposites as bottom/top, whole/half, full/empty. The only text is the word label appearing at the bottom of each page. See also *Counting Flowers* by the same author.

Ages: T, P, EG

Peters, Lisa Westberg, (Sam Williams, Illustrator), *Cold Little Duck, Duck, Duck*, Greenwillow Books (Harper Collins), 2000. As winter's end slips into spring, one little duck experiences the accompanying contrasts to his changing environment. Frozen ice that creak, creak creaks gradually melts away as it crack, crack, cracks. Boldly printed, sparse rhythmic text and charming animal illustrations make this an ideal read for even the youngest of listeners.
Ages: T, P, EG

Reiser, Lynn, *My Cat Tuna,* Greenwillow, 1972, 2001. (See also: *My Dog Truffle* by the same author.) This pair of cleverly designed lift-the-flap books introduces the child to the five senses through the animal of each text. (The words in each book are identical except for the identifying animal words: "Dog Truffle" or "Cat, Tuna"). Pages are designed to fold out into five sections to answer questions about what the animal heard, saw, smelled, tasted and felt. Answers are provided both pictorially and textually. Young children will be engaged by the fold outs and the many identifiable objects they reveal.
Ages: T, P

Spier, Peter, *Fast - Slow, High - Low*, Doubleday & Company, 1972, 1988. This is only one of Peter Spier's little books that help us observe and appreciate the everyday and commonplace. Each page begins with a pair of opposites in a boxed *key* drawing. Other examples of the boxed opposites appear on the same page. The varied assortment of subjects chosen to represent each set of opposites is both imaginative and inviting as it highlights the sounds made by various animals. (See also by the same author: *Crash! Bang! Boom!, Rain and Goggle, Growl, Grunt.*)

Ages: T, P, EG

Young, Ed, *Seven Blind Mice*, Philomel Books, 1992. Each of seven brightly colored mice takes a turn investigating the strange something by their pond. Each reports a different idea of what that something might be. Based on the fable of *The Elephant and the Blind Men*, these mice also discover that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. The oversize shiny black pages are bordered in white with foreground splashes of rich primary colors. These elements contrast well with the use of paper collage effect to form the various parts of the elephant. Basic concepts of colors, days of the week, quantities 1-7 and ordinal positions are also introduced.

Ages: P EG
Awards: Caldecott Honor Book

(c) Copyright 1997, 2001 by Lois W. Stern
All rights reserved